

Washington State's Biennial Budget Process WSP Performance Based Budgeting

The state's biennial budget process outlines an overall performance-based framework for budget decisions. The instructions for agencies to write their budgets are contained in *Operating Budget Instructions, Part 1: Guidelines for Strategic Plans and Performance Measures, 2005–07 Biennium*. The Governor's Office of Financial Management oversees and manages the budget development process. Since 2003-05, the budget process has incorporated Governor Locke's "Priorities of Government Approach." It has also tracked agency performance using an activities based approach.

The Priorities of Government process established eleven statewide outcomes against which all state spending in Executive agencies is measured. The WSP 2005–2007 strategic plan and proposed budget are linked with two "Priorities of Government Goals:"

- Improve statewide mobility of people, goods, information, and energy.
- Improve safety of people and property.

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) receives funding from all three of the state's budgets: Omnibus, Transportation, and Capital (designated from both omnibus and transportation monies). Appropriations to the Patrol for the 2003-05 Biennium include:

- \$90 million from the Omnibus Budget,
- \$255 million from the Transportation Budget, and
- \$22 million from the Capital Budget.

Of the Patrol's FTEs, most — 1,794 — are funded through the Transportation Budget, with an additional 525 funded through the Operating Budget.

WSP provides public safety services across Washington State. This includes, but is not limited to, troopers patrolling highways, forensic scientists working in the labs, security on the WA state ferries, and special drug enforcement forces. The basic distinction between whether those services are funded through the Transportation Budget or through the Omnibus Budget is reflected in the difference between the highway trooper and the drug task force: while patrolling the highways the trooper is considered to be conducting transportation-related policing services, while a drug task force member may be conducting general policing services. With some functions, however, the distinction in duties is not as clear.

The 18th Amendment to the State Constitution requires that highway-related funding be used exclusively for highway-related purposes. Agencies that receive both transportation and non-transportation funding are expected to account for and allocate costs consistent with the 18th Amendment. There are times when there is ambiguity, especially in the allocation of indirect and general agency overhead costs.

The Legislature's three transportation committees (house, senate, and combined) have historically paid close attention to 18th Amendment cost allocations. Transportation agencies like the WSP have been required to develop cost-accounting systems to tie their specific programs and activities to the fund sources used to pay for those programs and activities.